

Texas



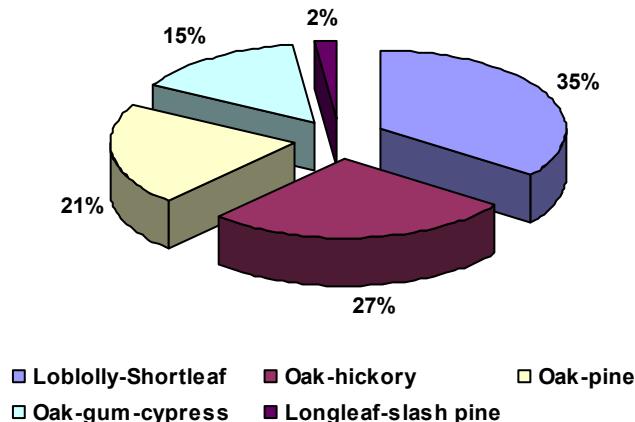
Forest Health Highlights 2009

The Resource

Texas' forests cover 14.6 million acres, more than half of the eastern section of the state where the climate supports trees. The majority of the state's forested land, some 10.7 million acres, is in non-industrial private ownership, while approximately 576,000 acres are in national forests. Texas' forests are prized for their scenic beauty, supporting tourism and outdoor recreation and providing wildlife habitat throughout eastern Texas. Major forest types in Texas include loblolly-shortleaf pine, oak-hickory, mixed oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress. Longleaf-slash pine accounts for only 2% of the forest.



East Texas Forest Type Distribution

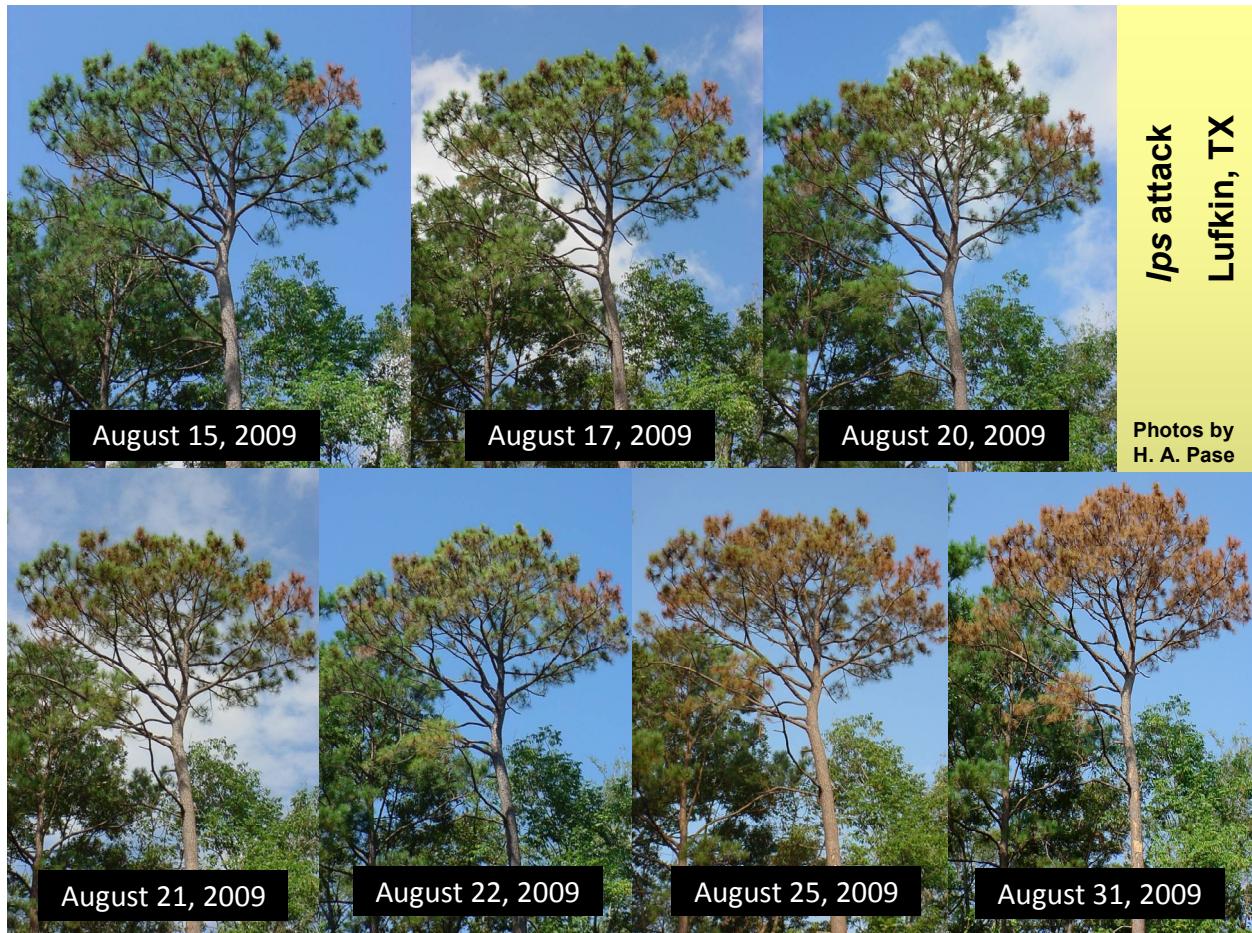


Forest Influences and Programs

• The **Southern pine beetle (SPB)** is the most important forest insect pest in Texas. Historically, the most severe SPB problems in the South have occurred in Texas. However, since 1994, SPB populations in Texas have been very low. **No SPB infestations were reported on state, private, or federal lands in Texas from 1998 through 2009.** A trapping system developed by the Texas Forest Service and now used in 12 southern states is used to forecast annual SPB infestation trends. Traps are deployed in the early spring to predict SPB infestation levels for that year. Early indications are that southern pine beetle activity in 2010 will continue to be very low.

• **Pine engraver beetles** (*Ips* spp.) activity reached outbreak proportions during August and September in the southern half of East Texas. The following counties experienced considerable pine tree mortality from *Ips* attacks: Harris, Montgomery, Grimes, Waller, San Jacinto, Liberty, Hardin, Polk, and Bastrop. Texas Forest Service district

offices as well as Forest Pest Management took numerous calls from homeowners and landowners who were concerned about dying trees. A news release was prepared that appeared in the *Houston Chronicle* and many other local newspapers. In addition several television and radio news interviews were conducted (See <http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=9828>). October rainfall along with cooler temperatures saw an end to most of the *Ips* activity. Information about pine engraver beetles is available on the Texas Forest Service web site at the following URL: <http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=1188>

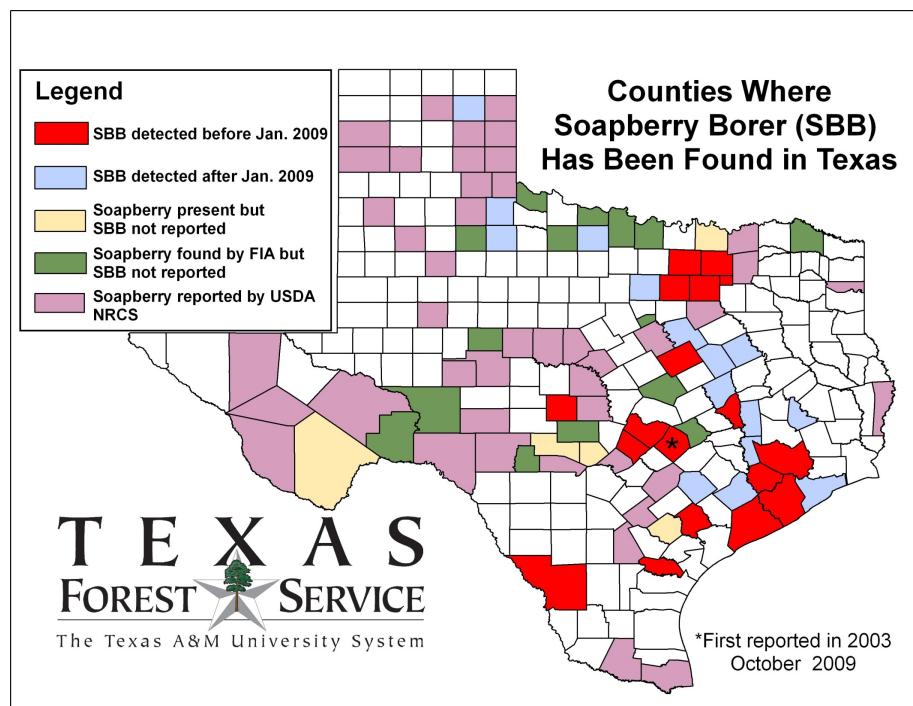


♣ Annual **rainfall** amounts for northeast Texas were double the long-term average in some areas. October was a very wet month across most of East Texas with many areas receiving 15 or more inches of rain. Although the 2009 annual total for most areas of East Texas will be above the long-term average because of high October rainfall, the summer months in southeast Texas were unusually hot and dry. Areas in Central and South Texas experienced very dry conditions for the first nine months of the year. The worst drought in recorded history occurred in the Texas Hill Country in 2009.

♣ **Exotic invasive species** are gaining increased attention as a serious problem impacting forests. The new *Invasive Species* program is taking the message of exotic invasive pests to the general public by enlisting the aid of trained citizen scientists to detect and report invasive species in their neighborhoods. **Numerous articles** about exotic pests that are present or are potential Texas invaders have been prepared by Texas Forest Service forest health specialists and others and are posted at the Texas invasives partnership web site (<http://www.texasinvasives.org>).

♣ **Soapberry Borer**, a buprestid beetle (*Agrilus prionurus*) has been attacking and killing western soapberry in some **33 counties** in Texas from Dallas to Corpus Christi to Laredo. This is believed to be a Mexican species that has extended its range into Texas during the past six years. A fact sheet discussing this pest has been posted on the Texas Forest Service

web site <http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=5316> In addition information about soapberry borer can be found at <http://www.texasinvasives.org> .



♦ **Oak wilt** (*Ceratocystis fagacearum*) continues to occur in over 70 counties in Texas, mostly between Dallas and San Antonio. Urban and rural oaks are affected. Trenches placed between diseased and healthy trees sever interconnected root systems and halt the spread of the disease. Texas Forest Service personnel contribute technical assistance to landowners to help minimize the impact of this tree disease. Technical information on oak wilt is made available via a web page devoted exclusively to oak wilt in Central Texas (www.texasoakwilt.org), developed by the Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC), the USGS National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII), USDA Forest Service Forest Health Protection, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and the Texas Forest Service.



Forest Health Assistance in Texas

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